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Ringling recoveries between Nigeria and eastern Europe

The Russian ringling authorities have sent details of the following recoveries.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

A1532 Ringed:	UUE-Massi, Parnu, Estonia	58°3'N, 24°46'E	4 Jul 1980
Recovered:	Matara Uku, Nigeria	12°47'N, 10°19'E	Oct–Nov 1996

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

8652 Ringed:	Vom, Nigeria	9°42'N, 8°45'E	17 Nov 1965
Recovered:	Pagrybe, Lithuania	55°30'N, 22°26'E	Jul–Sep 1966
24767 Ringed:	Kano, Nigeria	12°0'N, 8°30'E	19 Feb 1965
Recovered:	Kuntsevo, Russia	55°45'N, 37°30'E	Jun–Jul 1970

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First record of Brown-backed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas hartlaubi* in Nigeria

On 25 February 1997 we saw a Brown-backed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas hartlaubi* near Gashaka village in Gashaka-Gumti National Park (7°20'N, 11°35'E). The bird was singing in the top of a leafless tree of about 15 m height and was observed at length from a distance of less than 50 m through a telescope of 30x magnification. It showed a conspicuous white supercilium, two white wing-bars, bright rufous upper tail-coverts contrasting with the dark grey-brown upperparts, a bright rufous tail with

a broad, clear-cut black terminal band, white underparts with a grey wash and some faint, fine streaking on the breast forming an indistinct breast band, and a tawny wash on the flanks. The loud, clear song, which attracted attention, consisted of short, melodious, whistled phrases that were repeated over and over again. A tape-recording of the song was made the next morning, when the bird was encountered at the same site, singing from bushes, banana trees or elephant grass stems; once it was seen singing in flight. RD was familiar with the species in E Africa.

This appears to be the first record of the species in Nigeria; it is not mentioned in Elgood *et al.* (1994). The nearest records are from neighbouring Cameroon, where the species is known to occur in highland valleys north of Bamenda, some 200 km southwest of Gashaka (Keith *et al.* 1992). White-browed Scrub Robin *C. leucophrys*, a possible confusion species which, in W Africa, is only known from S Gabon and Congo (ssp. *munda*; Keith *et al.* 1992), has a similar song but lacks the contrasting pattern on the upperparts, where the warm rufous-brown of the back shades into rufous on the rump, while on the underparts the white is less pure and the breast shows a tawny (not grey) wash and distinct blackish streaks.

The visit to Gashaka-Gumti N.P. was part of field surveys for the Nigerian Conservation Foundation's Important Bird Areas in Nigeria project, coordinated by Dr. A.U. Ezealor. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and BirdLife International sponsored the project. We thank the management of Gashaka-Gumti N.P. for permission to work in it, Andrew Dunn of World Wide Fund for Nature for logistical help, and field assistants Mohammed G. Boyi, Abdulmalik L. Abubakar and Harry H. Junior. We are grateful to C. Chappuis for notes on *C. hartlaubi* vocalizations, M. Louette, Royal Museum for Central Africa (Tervuren), for access to skins, and L.D.C. Fishpool, A. Tye and P. Wood for comments on the manuscript.

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